DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 297 889 PS 017 535

AUTHOR Scott, Geraldine W.
TITLE The Use of Developmental Activities Rather than Reading Workbooks for Kindergarten Students Lacking Readiness Skills.
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 94p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University. Some pages have faint, broken print.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Basic Skills; *Curriculum Development; *Kindergarten Children; *Learning Activities; Primary Education; *Reading Readiness; *Student Improvement
IDENTIFIERS *Developmentally Appropriate Programs

ABSTRACT

Because the kindergarten curriculum of a small, rural elementary school appeared to be inappropriate for some children, a school psychologist implemented a practicum designed to provide a positive school experience for those not ready to learn from formal reading materials. The primary goal of the practicum was to provide activities during the reading period for kindergarten children lacking readiness skills. A second goal was to improve students' basic skills. Intervention activities included a survey of kindergarten teachers to determine their goals and feelings and to find out what kindergarten students were doing; discussion with administrators and teachers of the reasons for a change in some students' curriculum; mobilization of teacher support and agreement to change activities during the reading period; administration of a pre- and post-test to kindergarten children in the lowest reading groups; and regular meetings with teachers to resolve problems they encountered in modifying instruction. Evaluation data indicated that the intervention was positive. Teachers reported that children enjoyed the alternative learning activities. It is concluded that developmental activities can provide kindergarten children with the opportunity to develop readiness skills, and that such skills can be developed without formal reading instruction. Related materials are appended, including the teacher survey, responses, developmental activities log, and 14 pages of developmental activities. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED297889

PRACTICUM REPORT

Center for the
Advancement of Education
Ed.D. Program

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

The Use of Developmental Activities Rather Than Reading Workbooks for Kindergarten Students Lacking Readiness Skills

by

Geraldine W. Scott

PS 018635

3301 College Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33314
305/475-7300

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Geraldine W. Scott

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NOVA UNIVERSITY

The Use of Developmental Activities Rather Than Reading Workbooks for Kindergarten Students Lacking Readiness Skills

by

Geraldine W. Scott
Cluster 26-B

A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed. D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood in Partial Fullfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University
1988

PS 018 365

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Andrew J. Donnelly (signature)
Andrew J. Donnelly, PhD.

Superintendent of Schools
Title

Bridgeport, New Jersey
Address

July 6, 1988
Date

This practicum report was submitted by Geraldine W. Scott under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

8.24.88
Date of Final Approval of Report

JoEllen Salce Rodgers Ph.D. (signature)
JoEllen Salce Rodgers, Ph.D.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

TABLE OF CONTENTS. 11

Chapter

I INTRODUCTION. 1

Description of Community. 1
The Writer's Work Setting 3
The Writer's Role and Responsibilites 5

II STUDY OF THE PROBLEM. 9

Description of the Problem Situation 9
Documentation of the Problem 12
Analysis of the Causes 16
The Relationship of the Literature to the Problem. 18

III ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS. 24

Goals and Expectations 24
Behavioral Expectations. 24
Standards of Performance and Evaluation Tools 25

IV SOLUTION STRATEGIES. 28

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solution 28
Description of Selected Solution . . 37
Calendar Plan 39
Report of Action Taken 40

V RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of Results 45
Conclusions 51
Recommendations 53

REFERENCES. 55

Apppendices

A TEACHER SURVEY 58

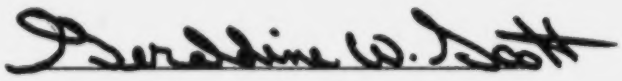
B RESPONSES TO THE TEACHER SURVEY. . . . 60

TABLE OF CONTENTS COONTINUED

		Page
C	SCOTT KINDERGARTEN CHECKLIST	67
D	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES LOG	70
E	RECORDED DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES LOG .	72
F	DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES	77

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Allie Nicholson, Speech Pathologist; Marcia Wright, Remedial Reading Teacher; Vivian Schroeder and Connie Mosley, Kindergarten teachers. Without their concerns and cooperation this problem would not have been identified or resolved. I also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Mary Lamme, Principal and Carol Stetson as reviewers on a draft of this report. Special appreciation is gratefully acknowledged to Lou Molinari for many hours of instruction in computers and his unfailing patience as well as assistance in the printing of this paper. I also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Sharon Bowen in typing the many drafts of this report.



Geraldine W. Scott

ABSTRACT

The Use of Developmental Activities Rather Than Reading Workbooks for Kindergarten Students Lacking Readiness Skills. Scott, Geraldine W., 1988: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed. D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: Kindergarten / Transitional Programs / Developmental Programs / Kindergarten Children / High Risk Students / Development / Primary Education / Student Placement Education Development / Readiness / Preschool Curriculum / Elementary School Curriculum.

This practicum was designed to enable kindergarten to be a positive school experience for developmentally young children not ready to learn from the use of a formal reading series. The present kindergarten curriculum appeared inappropriate for those children who lacked fine motor, language and preacademic skills. The primary goal was to provide activities during the reading period for those kindergarten students who lack readiness skills rather than the use of reading workbooks. A second goal was to improve those basic skills necessary for continued academic growth throughout the primary grades.

A survey was administered to the kindergarten teachers by the writer to determine their goals, feelings and what the kindergarten students were doing. The writer discussed with the administration and teachers the need and reasons for a change in the present curriculum for some students; obtained teachers' support and their agreement to change activities during the reading period; administered a pretest and posttest to the kindergarteners in the lowest reading groups; met regularly with teachers to resolve the problems they encountered.

The practicum results were positive. Developmental activities, rather than the use of reading workbooks, can provide kindergarteners with the opportunity to develop readiness skills. The teachers indicated the children were less frustrated and happier without the reading period each day. The teachers stated the children worked well, were interested and enjoyed the activities.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The public school district in which this practicum took place is rural in composition. The school district is in a township which is located on the eastern coast of the United States. The township has easy access to major traffic corridors such as freeways, turnpikes, and a bridge which joins the township with a neighboring state. The traffic corridors provide easy access to large suburban communities and major cities.

The first permanent settlers were Hollanders and Swedes. A number of pioneers came from Germany and Sweden and settled in two villages. Later immigrants from Poland, Italy, and other countries landed. They were good farmers. Occupations of the early settlers were closely allened to the environment with its natural resources and the needs of the individuals.

Of the 23.42 square miles comprising the township in 1972, 45% was cultivated by truck farmers. Nondeveloped land made up 46% of the township. Of all the land in the township 22% was wooded marsh or marsh. Market produce, lumber and other commodities were brought to the shipping point in one of the towns. Light industry has been encouraged. Many of the residents are employed in nearby industrial plants although the township remains mainly agricultural.

The population was 2,222 in 1950 but declined to an estimated population of 1,590 in 1975. This declining population trend was primarily the result of rural to urban migration. The turn upward shown in 1975 and further indicated in later census is attributed to the completion of a bridge adjoining the township development section with a neighboring state. A look at the number of single dwelling housing permits issued reveals a marked change. From 15 building permits issued in the four years preceeding 1975, the number of permits issued increased to 163 in 1976 and 1977, up to 468 in 1978 and 1979. The township's rate of development has been and will be greatly influenced by the excellent roadway network. This is evidenced by the success of the eight housing developments and an industrial park. The latest population figure is 3,439.

The original community remains very much the same with the residents being mainly truck farmers and blue collar workers employed in construction, industrial plants, chemical industries, a marina or a tire company. The newer community in the township appears to consist of residents with low middle, middle and upper middle incomes. They are blue collar workers and white collar workers who are employed primarily in business, education, professions or self employed. Because of the good highway system many residents work in neighboring states. There are a large number of families moving in or moving out of the township each year. There seems to be some resentment between the adults in the two distinct sections of the township.

The Writer's Work Setting

Originally there were small rural schools in each community which eventually closed. The first part of the present elementary school was built thirty years ago and housed all children in grades kindergarten to eighth and one special class. Secondary students attend one of two high schools on a tuition basis. With the advent of a housing development in the school year 1979-1980, four rooms were rented in a local church for grades four and five. In 1981, the school district rented one half of a school in an adjoining community. The upper grades were moved there. Three years later the whole school building was rented and houses grades four through eight. There are three special education classrooms and one resource room for special needs students. In the elementary school, there are presently three kindergarten classes, one transitional 1st grade and three 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades as well as one special education class.

Pupils in kindergarten and grades one through five are in self contained classrooms; pupils in grades six through eight are in a departmentalized program. All classes have special teachers in art, music, library, health and physical education. Both schools have a remedial math and reading teacher as well as a school nurse. A speech pathologist services students with speech and language problems. The services of a child study team consisting of a learning disabilities teacher consultant and a school psychologist are available full time for both schools.

Approximately 99% of the pupils in the township are transported by school buses. The elementary school has approximately 260 students while there are approximately 280 students in the school. The school district has 26.5 acres of land designated as a proposed middle school site which was set aside by the new community development. Plans are presently being made to submit the building of a new school to the voters.

The philosophy, for the school district ,adopted in 1974 is that every child should be developed to his/her fullest potential. It encompasses the theory of the "whole child" which includes all areas of development and deals with the reality of living, as well as coping with everyday problems.

Due to the small size of the school district, the chief school administrator was an Admininistrative Principal in 1977. The present chief school administrator has been there for nine years and his title was changed to Superintendent/Principal in 1981. There has been considerable changes in the structure of the administration and in the administrators. In the last five years, there have been five different principals. These changes have had negative effects on the school district due to the lack of stability. Presently, there is a superintendent and principal in each building.

The teaching staff appear to remain in the district with few leaving each year for reasons such as pregnancy or positions found closer to home. The teaching staff appear relatively happy and cooperate nicely together. For the most part, the environment

appears to be one of professionals caring and respect for one another. The teachers also appear to be respected by the residents in the township.

The Writer's Role and Responsibilities

As the school psychologist, the writer's basic function is to serve as a consultant to the school district in all aspects of functioning and to provide a better educational environment for all students in school. Traditionally, much of the work of the school psychologist has been directed toward diagnosing behavioral and scholastic problems of individual children. The writer is a member of the child study team and is responsible to communicate with the residents of the community the types of services provided by the child study team as well as the overall nature of good emotional, social, and personal adjustment.

Students referred to the child study team by the classroom teacher usually are experiencing difficulty in the classroom with academics, behavior problems, attention span, or overactivity. Meetings are scheduled and held with the students, parents and classroom teachers to develop intervention plans in an attempt to alleviate the problems. After the specified length of time determined necessary for the intervention, another meeting is held with the parents, teachers and possibly the principal to determine the outcome of the intervention activities.

Unsuccessful intervention plans necessitate the parent's permission for child study team evaluations. Following evaluations, a conference is held with parents and teachers to share the results of the evaluations as well as the student's eligibility for special education. Students classified and therefore eligible for special education, need an individualized educational program. The writer is involved in the consultation meetings previously discussed as well as developing and writing an individualized educational program for each classified student's particular needs. Meetings are held at least annually to update the individualized educational program for each special needs or classified student.

As the school psychologist, the writer is also given the responsibility of case manager to a specified number of classified students. As case manager, the writer is the liason between the classroom teacher and parents regarding the student. The case manager must bridge the gap between special and regular education along with helping to see that the child's needs are met as mainstreaming and program implementation occurs.

Since the district does not employ a guidance counselor, one of the writer's responsibilities include counseling with individual children who show personal and or behavioral difficulty. Referrals for counseling come from the classroom teachers, subject teachers, parents, administration or a student's Individualized Educational Program. The writer has the opportunity to meet with the children either on a one to one basis

or in small groups so counselor student relationships are easily developed. The counselor may see a different side of a child and their family dynamics than the classroom teacher. The counselor may be able to assist the child in developing self confidence and socialization skills while working on specific goals.

The writer is also involved in parent education regarding sound child rearing practices. Following a needs assessment, a parent support group was established this year in response to concerns voiced by the staff and administration. The group met three times this year. Planned programs were provided and an opportunity for the parents to share their concerns with each other in an attempt to resolve their concerns or problems. The writer has the opportunity to schedule her time between work with children, parents, teachers, other school personnel and administration as relates to the overall social emotional development or health of children and the educational environment.

The writer assumed the school psychologist position in the district at the beginning of the current school year, September, 1987. The writer's employment history includes twenty three years in education following a change from the nursing profession. The writer has worked as an administrator with preschool children and their parents in two different private educational environments. The writer has been a member of several elementary public school child study teams as a social worker, learning disabilities teacher consultant or school psychologist.

As an adjunct professor in a state college, the writer has also taught undergraduate courses in early childhood and special education as well as supervising early childhood student teachers. The writer has had fifteen years experience as a school nurse on a college campus in first an elementary demonstration school which later became an early childhood demonstration center. Eight of these years was spent involved in a model program funded by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped to integrate handicapped and nonhandicapped preschoolers. One of the writers major roles in this program was to provide the developmental assessment for the developmentally delayed children and eventually to supervise the educational program. The writer has had training from the Gesell Institute in developmental assessment as well as training in the use of a variety of assessment instruments and curriculums including the Vulpe Assessment Battery, Language and Learning Assessment: for Training (The Houston), The Schaunberg Screening, The High Scope Curriculum, and the Marshalltown Behavioral Developmental Profile and Curriculum.

The writer's educational background includes a diploma from a school of nursing, an undergraduate degree in Health Education for School Nurses and a masters degree in Student Personnel Services. Additional certifications held include School Psychologist, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant, School Social Worker, Director of Student Personnel Services, Supervisor, Principal and Nursery Teacher.

Chapter II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Description of the Problem Situation

In the elementary school in which this practicum took place there is a board approved curriculum to be followed by all teachers. The curriculum for the kindergarten classes includes a formal reading program to be taught to all students using a particular reading series. The present reading series includes workbooks for the lowest level reading group that uses small print and the introduction of several different concepts on one page.

There is a wide difference in children's developmental levels upon entrance to kindergarten. There is also a large difference in the children's previous experiences before entrance to kindergarten. Some of the children have attended a preschool program for one, two, or three years on a part time or full time basis.

According to the classroom teachers and speech pathologist, many children appear immature, lack fine motor skills and have poor speech and language development. The wide differences in the children's behavioral age or developmental levels makes it difficult for the teachers to teach the children using the standard curriculum and present reading materials. The size of the classes and the wide differences in the children's developmental levels make it difficult for both the teachers and

students. There are 19 or 20 students in each class and only one teacher aide in the morning between two classrooms.

The teachers are frustrated as their lesson plans, developed to follow the curriculum, do not consider the student's developmental levels. Because some students have not acquired readiness skills, they are unable to understand the concepts being taught in the reading series. The teachers are under a great deal of stress as they feel the need to complete the reading program and other activities indicated in the curriculum. Some students take a longer period of time to accomplish designated tasks. The teachers feel they do not have the time necessary to assist the children lacking readiness skills and also teach the mature students . Some children are under stress as they work on activities above their developmental levels. These children may develop poor self images as they cannot keep up with the other students.

The teachers report that many children require a great deal of individual attention from the teacher. Some children are frequently unable to do the work that is expected of them. The students may appear to daydream or keep themselves busy in ways to avoid the work. Ilg and Ames (1964) describe these children as too young either in age or behavior. It would appear these children are overplaced. Other signs of overplacement in children include the following: may be withdrawn or a loner; lacks self confidence to do most things; uncomfortable with peers. The

children lacking readiness skills are exhibiting some of these behaviors.

The teacher's high expectations of the student's readiness skills may correlate with the abilities of the more mature students who have had two or three years of preschool education. The wide differences in the developmental levels of the children causes frustrations on the part of the teachers as they attempt to follow the curriculum. The developmentally young students are asked to learn how to read and are instructed in the same manner as the more mature students.

In an attempt to give attention to the needs and differences in individual children, the children were grouped into four reading groups. These groups were formed based on the screening results from the preschool readiness tests and a speech and language screening. The speech pathologist instructs the lowest reading group while the remedial reading teacher instructs the other low reading group.

Two kindergarten classes changed sessions midyear. The morning class was changed to the afternoon session and the afternoon class was changed to the morning session. This change in classes caused a change in the reading groups. There now appears to be wider differences in the students reading ability causing the need for six reading groups at this time. The kindergarten aide and a student teacher were used as the additional teachers for the two additional reading groups.

Last year a transitional first grade was implemented because 12 of the students who had completed kindergarten were determined by their teachers as not ready for first grade. Although these children appear to be succeeding in the transitional first grade, it did not help the teachers cope with the developmentally young kindergarteners.

In conclusion, this practicum addressed the problem that some kindergarten students are not developmentally ready for a formal reading program. The evident developmental delays were in fine motor development and language development.

Documentation of the Problem

During a conversation with the head kindergarten teacher, speech and language pathologist and the remedial reading teacher, the problems they were experiencing in the classroom were brought to the writer's attention. Their comments centered around the wide differences in the kindergarten student's abilities and appeared to be the cause of th problems.

To document the problem stated earlier the writer asked the kindergarten teachers, speech pathologist and remedial reading teacher to meet and discuss the problem further. The speech pathologist and remedial reading teacher will be referred to as teachers during the rest of this proposal unless a distinction for clarity needs to be made. The teachers agreed to cooperate with the writer during this practicum as they are anxious to resolve the problem with the developmentally young kindergarteners.

The student's screening results by the speech pathologist and the results of the readiness tests were reviewed by the writer. Of the 59 students who were screened prior to the start of kindergarten or upon entrance into the program, 21.5% failed the speech screening while another 17% fell within the borderline range.

In looking at the children's scores on the readiness test, there was no comparison between the two screening instruments. The categories in the readiness test were gross motor, fine motor, concepts and communications. The majority of students who failed the speech screening received scores on the readiness test which were within the age appropriate range. However, the teachers report the speech screening and their observation of the children's behaviors are truer indications of their skills than the formal readiness test used.

A teachers survey (see Appendix A) was used in which the teachers indicated what their feelings were about the present kindergarten situation. The open-ended survey was designed to allow teachers to write their thoughts and feelings in their own words about the current kindergarten program. A brief discussion of the significant points is presented here.

The four teachers reveal a need for a developmental kindergarten for the very low children, grouping, a class geared specifically for the children in lower developmental stages, and an all day kindergarten to help the students develop skills in reading and math. The overall need appears to be a way to address

each child's individual needs and abilities to enable them to experience success.

A review of the first grade permanent records reveals 10 students were placed in the lower first grade for the 1986-1987 school year and 16 students were placed in the lower level first grade in 1985-1986. Therefore, it is apparent that the problem regarding a large difference in the kindergartener's readiness levels is not new this year.

According to the teacher survey, responses to the question, "What should the children entering kindergarten be like?" were varied. Expectations of the head kindergarten teacher from the children upon entrance to kindergarten appears to this writer to be inappropriate even though she is an excellent kindergarten teacher. This teacher had a large role in the development of the present kindergarten curriculum. This teacher would like the children to know their name, address and telephone number as well as be attentive to a task for 10 minutes. The teacher would also like the students to be able to follow two or three step commands, manipulate scissors, pencils and crayons as well as work in large or small group settings. Other teachers responses to the same question appear more appropriate. The responses were: able to be separated easily from parents; full of wonder, creativeness and willing to share thoughts and ideas freely; able to attend and sit for appropriate time; some social interactive skills; age level semantics, syntax and vocabulary patterns and basic concept awareness (name, color, size).

To the question "What are the students in kindergarten doing?" the teacher's responded : being forced to go along with state and local curriculums because they are mandated and we are frustrating the children to become children with problems: preparing for first grade - reading readiness, recognition of letters, shapes, numbers and colors: socialization activities: learning to follow directions: expanding personal information: fine and gross motor skills, developing listening skills: some are reading. To the question "What should the students in kindergarten be doing?" the following responses were given: developing a positive self image; working at his/her own level, some on very basic readiness skills, others on advanced programs; preparing for first grade; to develop at their own pace through the use of manipulative activities, developing an interest in the world around them; gaining satisfaction through creating, communicating ideas using various medias, developing good social behavior.

The one fact which appeared as a response and seems to summarize the teacher's feelings is that some of the kindergarteners are accomplishing age appropriate goals but approximately 25% of the children are not. Preschool skills such as knowing personal information, fine motor skills (cutting, pasting, tracing, coloring), and socialization skills must be accomplished by 25% of the children before basic readiness skills in reading can be started.

An interview with the elementary principal revealed she was aware of the teacher's concerns regarding the large differences in the kindergartener's readiness skills. Although she does not have a background in working with primary grade students, she is supportive of her staff's concerns and is interested in finding a remedy to the problem.

Analysis of the Causes

The problem of some kindergarteners not being developmentally ready for the kindergarten curriculum may have several causes. One cause of the problem may be the curriculum which includes a formal reading program. Reading used to be taught formally in the first grade when the children were closer to 6 or 7 years of age. The curriculum is academically oriented rather than meeting the individual needs of the students. Not all children are ready for formal education at the same time.

A related cause of this problem is the formal reading series used in this kindergarten is composed of a series of workbooks that have small print and could cover four new concepts per page. Many children are having trouble doing the work in the reading workbooks. Children's vision and hearing are not fully developed at 5 or 6 years of age. They therefore may have problems with the formal reading program.

Changes in the kindergarten curriculum came about from social, political and perhaps economic considerations when elementary and secondary education was under attack. One

rationalization for the problems was that children were poorly prepared for school.

There is a growing number of women in the work force. Divorce has become more acceptable and divorce rates have soared. Elkind (1986) suggests parents may feel guilty about leaving their children in others care during the preschool years. Some of their guilt can be relieved by placing the child in a high pressure academic situation as it is seen for the child's own good. The teachers feel pressure from parents for academics being taught in kindergarten and therefore, do not feel they can recommend changes in the present curriculum.

Another motive for formal instruction comes from the association regarding human behavior and technology. The fallacy is that thanks to the innovation of television and computers, children today are more sophisticated and brighter than children in the past. According to Elkind (1986), there is no truth in the belief human potential is altered by technology. Rather than making reading easier, television has amplified the attention limitations of young children by the rapid presentation of material which is too fast for the information processing abilities of young children. Short attention spans in the kindergarteners is one of the concerns of the teachers.

Another possible cause of the problem is the wide difference in children's chronological age on entrance into kindergarten. The children need to be 5 years of age by October 1st to register for kindergarten. This means the youngest child could be 4.11

years and the oldest may be 5.11 years or one year older with a September 30th birthday of the proceeding year.

Another reason for the problem may be a child's developmental age can be younger or older than his chronological age and has nothing to do with his intelligence (Ames et al., 1979). Areas considered by Gesell (1940) in all of the Gesell developmental screening are as follows: Motor; Adaptive; Language; Personal - Social. Many kindergarteners are developmentally less than 5 years of age in one or more of these areas of development. Children may be chronologically one age but their behaviors are consistant with a much younger age level.

Another contributing factor to the problem may be the sex differences in the rate of development. Ilg and Ames (1972) refer to boys being 6 months below girls in their development as boys develop more slowly than girls.

The role of language, famial factors, socio-economic variables, social interaction and parent's education all may contribute to the child's development. The social environment in which the child grows up and the cultural variations should also be considered influential in the child's development.

The Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

A review of the literature was made to provide the writer with a better understanding of the problem and assistance in investigating the causes. Elkind (1986) writes the special character of learning in early childhood is being ignored by

people who should know better. He feels the research and consensus of experts about how best to teach young children and how they learn is being ignored. Curricula including workbooks and papers once reserved for first graders are introduced in many kindergartens. This is happening even though the principle that education should be adapted to the learning abilities of the students to be instructed is not questioned. In the 1960's, the economic, political and social pressures which were influencing elementary and secondary education began also to influence kindergarten. Elkind discusses the harm in exposing young children to formal instruction and refers to it as "miseducation". A short term risk of miseducating young children is stress while the long term effects may include harming the child's motivation to learn as well as putting the child at intellectual risk and at social risk.

Elkind (1988) sees no evidence that a child who is taught to read at an early age has a lasting advantage over a six or seven year old child who learns to read. Ames, Gilespie, Haines, and Ilg (1979) emphasize that it should be the child's behavior age and not his chronological age which determines the time to introduce reading instruction. However, there is a small percentage of children who are spontaneously interested in reading themselves and this should be encouraged no matter what their age. Elkind supports this concept. Reading instruction introduced before the child is developmentally ready leads to failure and

confusion (Ames et al.). Behavior is biologically determined and develops in a patterned predictable way.

Bredekamp (1986) identifies several appropriate practices for young children. The developmental needs of the child should be considered by the educational system. Children learn from experimentation, self directed problem solving and active exploration. Developmental assessment along with teacher and parent observations are used to plan the curriculum. Elkind (1988) supports this by suggesting a true kindergarten provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum. The structure of an effective kindergarten is organized into interest areas where through active manipulation children can acquire fundamental concepts.

Cooke and Stammer (1985) suggest special attention through carefully designed and individualized programs are needed by the students having difficulty learning. Teachers should examine effective methods of teaching, the appropriateness of the curriculum and the progress the child is making toward learning as problem sources rather than blame the students shortcomings. Friesen ends with the thought that our awareness that not all children are ready for formal academic study at the same time should not be forgotten as the renewed interest in the "back to basics" movement with its emphasis on having more academic study in the curriculum earlier.

Uphoff and Gilmore's (1985) review of research revealed elementary school children who entered kindergarten when less than

five years three months of age have problems with attentiveness. Kindergarten teachers are presently teaching in Kindergarten much of what was presented in first grade 20 years ago. Uphoff and Gilmore suggest children face disadvantages that may become lifelong when they are developmentally unprepared to cope with school.

Doctors Ilg and Ames (1972) worked with children in the public schools and realized that many children did not have the maturity to effectively accomplish the tasks presented because they were not mature developmentally. The Gesell School Readiness Test assesses a child's developmental functioning in social, emotional, physical and adaptive capacities. Schools use the Gesell assessments to gain developmental understanding of the child and to predict school success. The Gesell School Readiness Screening Test is seen as a valuable tool to recognize developmental age and therefore is a means to enhance developmentally appropriate curriculum (Gesell, 1987).

Meisels' (1987) article analyzed the uses and abuses of developmental screening tests and readiness tests. A brief assessment of a child's developmental abilities that are associated with future school success are known as developmental screening tests. Readiness tests are assessing the curriculum - related skills a child has acquired. These skills are pre-requisites for instructional programs. Many researchers have identified the effects of environmental intervention on child development. Maturation is viewed as only one aspect of

development and researchers today include other factors such as "famial factors, socioeconomic variables, sex differences, encounters with physical and social environment and the internal regulations of new information with pre-existing schemes of action" (p. 69).

Abbott (1972) reports each child should be seen as an individual student with his own unique experience, homelife, background, needs, learning style and abilities. To be effective educational programming must take all of these into consideration. Early education is important particularly for the children in whom the developmental process has broken down at one of the earlier stages. Factors causing these breakdowns in the developmental process may be environmental deprivation, defects or injuries in the organism or emotional stress with which the child is unable to cope. Several of these breakdowns are revealed in the early grades through low academic achievement and difficulties in learning. Abbott's hypothesis that delayed development, mal-development or non-development of basic motor skills in a child leads to the inability to profit from the curriculum offered in the regular classroom.

Senior (1986) wrote about the developmentally young child frequently becoming a victim of mislabeling as learning disabled, an inappropriate classification. A child who is developmentally young or overplaced for her/his present grade is missing the skills needed to perform tasks assigned in the classroom. The child therefore becomes frustrated and may manifest symptoms or

problems with attention span, reading or behavior that is characteristic of the learning disabled child.

Shepard and Smith (1986) in their research on school readiness and kindergarten retention state that children beginning formal schooling differ tremendously in their readiness to learn and their ability to follow directions. They suggest that the great diversity in social maturity and cognitive development causes a teaching problem that educators try to resolve. They have found that achievement differences between the youngest and oldest first graders are not statisically significant. They also found through their research no difference in reading achievement or math achievement between the youngest and oldest children in either third or fourth grade.

In conclusion, a review of the literature reveals that education should be adapted to the learning ability and developmental need of the students. A child's behavior or developmental age and not his/her chronological age should be considered when determining the time to introduce formal reading instruction.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

In order for the kindergarten students to have positive experiences in a less stressful environment, a change in the present kindergarten curriculum was needed. Developmental activities which involve active exploration of a variety of materials can develop the kindergartener's basic skills necessary for continued growth throughout the primary grades. The following goals were projected for this practicum:

1. To provide activities during the reading period for those kindergarten students who lack readiness skills.
2. To improve those basic skills necessary for continued academic growth throughout the primary grades.

Behavioral Expectations

The literature review concerning appropriate practices in kindergarten suggest the use of the child's development in planning a curriculum. The fact that not all children are ready for formal academic study at the same time must be considered. The first behavioral objective addresses these issues. The second, third and fourth behavioral objectives address the demonstrated growth of the kindergarteners. The following

behavioral objectives were projected for this practicum:

1. At least one developmental learning activity will be provided in the 30 minute reading period each day as measured by documentation in the Developmental Activities Log (see Appendix D).

2. Each child in the lowest reading group will demonstrate an increase in language skills as measured by mastery of 7 out of 10 language items on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist (See Appendix C).

3. Each child in the targeted group will demonstrate an increase in fine motor skills as measured by mastery of 7 out of 10 fine motor items on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist (see Appendix C).

4. Each child in the targeted group will demonstrate an increase in academic skills as measured by mastery of 8 out of 12 items under academics on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist (see Appendix C).

Standards of Performance and Evaluation Tools

The standards of performance projected to measure behavioral expectations and the assessment instruments are as follows:

1. One developmental activity will be provided each day in the 30 minute reading period. The teacher recorded information regarding the daily activities in the Developmental Activities Log (see

Appendix D). This log is divided into three columns where the date, activity and comments were recorded.

2. The standard of achievement will be mastery of 7 out of 10 items under Language on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist (see Appendix C). This instrument was used by the writer and the teacher for preassessment and by the writer for postasesssment.

The Scott Kindergarten Checklist was developed to enable assessment of the kindergarten student's delayed areas of development. The children were screened by two teachers prior to kindergarten entrance using formal and informal instruments. These test results revealed a number of the students lacked readiness skills and were delayed in language, fine motor and academic development. The students were grouped together for reading.

The Scott Kindergarten Checklist was divided into three areas which measure language, fine motor and academic development (see Appendix C). There were 10 items in the language and fine motor areas and 14 items under academics. The possible responses were yes or no.

3. The standard of achievement will be mastery of 7 out of 10 fine motor items noted on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist. This instrument was used by the writer and teacher at the beginning of the 12 week period and by the writer at the end.

4. The standard of achievement will be mastery of 8 out of 12 items under Academics on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist. This instrument was used by the teacher at the beginning of the 12 week period and by the writer at the end.

A journal was used to note the events that happened during the implementation period. This enabled the writer to document unplanned happenings and experiences that occured which resulted in changes in the original plans.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

To promote success and the development of a positive self image, kindergartener's learning activities must be appropriate to the child's age and stage of development along with his/her personal interests. The literature review disclosed several alternatives to alleviate the problem of five year old children experiencing failure in the classroom. The alternatives are as follows:

1. To change the age when children enter kindergarten so they would be fully 5 years of age.
2. A better match between the child's developmental age and grade placement.
3. An appropriate curriculum in kindergarten without academic pressure.
4. An individualized program to respond to children's individual differences.
5. Screening preschoolers for readiness and encouraging parents to delay their child's entry into kindergarten.
6. The use of a well designed assessment process to determine children's readiness to enter kindergarten or to be promoted to first grade.
7. Provision of a special kindergarten or a transitional first, prefirst, or junior-first grade.

8. Implement a school retention policy.

Raise kindergarten entrance age: Uphoff and Gilmore's (1985) research found that chances for failure increase dramatically when children enter school when they are not developmentally ready to cope with it. Uphoff and Gilmore, Gesell (1987), Ilg and Ames (1972) and King's (1984) position is that a child's behavior or developmental age and not his chronological age should determine the time of school entrance. Uphoff and Gilmore, King, and Sheppard and Smith (1986) suggest possible actions, listed previously, that parents, schools or states may initiate to resolve the problem.

Simner (1983) reports regarding three studies of investigation that by increasing kindergarten entrance age from 57 to 60 months the incidence of school failure can be greatly reduced. Results of the studies suggested that initiating a psychometically based program supplemented by intervention designed to meet the needs of the failure prone child is more productive than raising the age. Friesen (1984), an Oklahoma principal, also did research to support his request to change the state age entry law from November 1 to September 1. The recommendation to change the age for school admission was made following King's (1984) review of the literature.

Shepard and Smith (1986) describe the youngest child as being at a disadvantage no matter what their age is at entrance to school. They find the research evidence offers a convincing case that the youngness problem is not absolute but relative.

In the writer's school district, the present cut off date for entrance into kindergarten is 5 years of age by October 1st. The literature review did not appear to offer enough evidence to justify a change in the present policy. Therefore, changing the entrance age was not thought of as a viable alternative to resolve the problem.

Better match between developmental age and developmental placement: Early identification of developmentally young children can be done by kindergarten teachers using developmental and readiness tests. The Gesell Institute developed the Gesell School Readiness Screening, the Gesell School Readiness Test and the Gesell Preschool Assessment (Ilg and Ames 1972). A child's developmental functioning is determined by these assessments. A child's social, emotional, physical and adaptive capacities are considered using the Gesell approach. Schools use the Gesell assessments to gain developmental understanding of the child and to predict school success.

Wood, Powell and Knight's (1984) study was undertaken to determine the predictive validity of the Gesell School Readiness Test in determining school readiness. They found developmental age a useful measure to predict later school performance. The Gesell School Readiness Test was found effective in determining child success or failure in kindergarten.

However, Meisels (1987) cites the most frequent abuse of developmental screening results from the use of tests that do not have reliability (test consistency) and validity (accuracy).

Meisels states "inadequate sampling procedures, absence of validity data, inattention to issues of reliability and sources of variance in recording performances render the entire normative foundation of the Gesell Tests questionable" (p. 71).

Schmidt and Perino (1985) investigated the ability of a battery of kindergarten screening measures to predict criteria which is educationally relevant. There is conflicting evidence regarding the efficiency of screening measures to identify children at risk for learning failure and those who have high achievement potential.

Shepard and Smith (1986) found a large error rate on available tests, including the Gesell, used to screen children into special programs. They feel this does not make them accurate enough to use for this purpose. Some readiness tests may be better used to help teachers organize instruction for the children rather than sort the children into unready or ready groups.

Developmental curriculum: Ames, Gilespie, Haines and Ilg (1979) stress that the time to introduce reading instruction should be based on the child's behavior age and not his/her chronological age. BredeKamp (1986) indicates the developmental needs of the child should be considered by the educational system. Appropriate practices identified for young children involve experimentation, active exploration and self directed problem solving. Elkind (1988) is in support of a developmentally appropriate curriculum in kindergarten. The environment in the classroom would be divided into areas where children acquire

fundamental concepts in varied ways. The writer's previous experiences, education and philosophy would strongly support developmentally appropriate practices for kindergarten.

A cognitively oriented curriculum would attempt to build a developmentally valid educational framework for children whose period of development would be in what Piaget calls the pre-operational period (Ginsberg & Opper,1969). The teacher involved as the instigator and the child actively involved in problem solving would be a more appropriate environment in kindergarten for many students.

The writer has worked in a setting which used a Piagetian curriculum model, High Scope, from the Perry Preschool Project . This appeared to be a positive model for kindergarteners to follow. Presently, the children have no input into the planning of the daily work and little time to talk to their teacher or evaluate what they accomplished that day. The writer would like to see changes in the present kindergarten curriculum, however, the teaching staff and administration do not support this alternative.

Individualization of program: Cooke and Stammer (1985) suggest special attention through carefully designed and individualized programs is needed by the students having difficulty learning. Teachers should examine effective methods of teaching, the appropriateness of the curriculum and the progress the child is making toward learning as problem sources rather than blame the student's shortcomings.

Abbott (1972) reports each child should be seen as an individual student with his own unique experience, home life, background, needs, learning style and abilities. To be effective educational programming must take all of these into consideration. Significant difficulties in perceptual motor skills are demonstrated by children with learning problems and or emotional problems. Abbott's hypothesis that delayed development, mal-development or nondevelopment of basic motor skills in a child leads to the inability to profit from the curriculum offered in the regular classroom. The Waukegan developmental kindergarten classes focus on the early identification and specification of problems, development of children's visual motor and language skills and creation as well as evaluation of techniques to increase school readiness.

Delaying kindergarten entry a year: Friesen (1984) suggested having children remain at home one extra year as a method to avoid overplacement. Simner (1983) reports there is evidence to suggest that by remaining at home an extra year children's chances for academic success may be reduced. The writer and staff in the school district would not be comfortable allowing developmentally young children to remain at home without intervention and stimulation.

Determination of children's readiness for kindergarten or first grade: The use of the Gesell School Readiness Test was found effective in determining child success or failure in kindergarten (Wood, Powell and Knight (1984). Meisels (1987)

investigates developmental screening and readiness tests. Senior (1986) suggests the use of a developmental kindergarten for children identified through a kindergarten screening as developmentally young. Children identified as developmentally young prior to first grade may be placed in a transitional first grade.

Graftt (1980) from Orinda, California School District found their Developmental Kindergarten Program, which was developed five years ago, successful. Cansfield's (1986) study was of the twelve year old developmental kindergarten in Grand Haven, Michigan Public Schools developed to prevent school failure. Similar to Graftt (1980), Cansfield's (1986) studies revealed that the developmental kindergarteners perform as well as or better than age and sex peers in regular kindergarten in later years.

Kilby (1984) studied a transitional program in Sioux Falls, South Dakota which became known as a Junior First Grade. The program goal was to help provide its students with a strong foundation, academically, emotionally and socially in order to help improve their chances for success in the primary grades. The results of the study reveal positive and long lasting effects on reading achievement, decreased grade repetition in the primary grades, and significantly decreased classification of learning disabilities and placement in special education.

However, Gredler's (1984) analysis of the research studies of children placed in transition rooms indicates the questionability

of the benefit that the transitional room has on the children's achievement levels.

Galloway and George (1986) describe a Junior Kindergarten in Chesterfield County, Virginia. This program was piloted in 1985 to improve children's chances of early success. The year long alternative program is for children of legal school age who are not developmentally ready for kindergarten whether it be socially, emotionally, physically or intellectually. The children who attend junior kindergarten are prevented from developing an early failure syndrome.

In Mascoutah, Illinois a program was designed for parents of 4 year olds who are at risk the following year for kindergarten entry (Schmitt, 1986). This unique preschool program services the child and parent or parent substitute 1 1/2 hours a week for thirty weeks. The parents spend part of this time observing their pre-schooler during large group instruction. New concepts are introduced that the parents will be applying at home during their daily activities with their child. These home activities are considered the most important aspect of the Mascoutah program. The program of parents and school as partners in preschool education was developed nine years ago. It is seen as a cost effective method of influencing development in a large number of children.

Retention: Cooke and Stammer's 1985 review of the research reveals neither social promotion nor grade retention solves the low achieving students academic difficulties. Supporting this

study is a study by Peterson, DeGracie and Ayabe (1987) on the effects of retention or promotion on academic achievement after three years whether retained or promoted. However, Kerzner's (1982) study revealed students benefited academically from retention particularly when retained in grades one, two, or three. Holmes and Matthew's (1984) study which analyzed data from 43 studies on several variables taking in academic achievement, personal adjustment including self concept, attitude toward school and behavior revealed the outcomes were more positive for promoted students than for those retained. Finlayson's (1977) study of primary grade student's self concept and the effect of nonpromotion revealed nonpromotion did not negatively influence self-concept.

Sandoval's (1984) study on how the decision is made for the children to be retained in first grade revealed some children are appropriately retained and some are not. Children retained seemed to have low cognitive development, academic incompetence and low visual motor skills. Sandoval's study focused on aspects of immaturity that could be documented by psychometric measures. Non-promotion is seen as a crude intervention.

The writer's previous experiences with students who have failed suggest retention causes the development of negative feelings regarding their abilities and school. However, the fact that all students may not be ready for the formal education in the present kindergarten curriculum is an agreed upon fact. The

teaching staff and administration also do not appear to feel positive about retention in kindergarten.

To summarize, in the writer's review of the literature there appears to be studies to indicate the positive effects of developmental kindergartens, transitional classes or pre-first grade. However, there are others that question the benefits of transitional placement. Other suggestions include a change in the kindergarten curriculum to better meet each child's individual needs or the integration of the at risk child within the kindergarten program. Children appear to achieve the same status in reading achievement by the time they reach third grade whether or not any intervention is made.

Description of Selected Solution

The solution selected to resolve the problem of kindergarteners struggling with the present curriculum and experiencing feelings of frustration and failure was to change the activities used during the 30 minute reading period. Instead of using the workbooks from the reading series, appropriate learning activities were selected to assist in the development of the kindergartener's language, fine motor and academic skills. The activities selected allowed for the exploration of a variety of concrete materials and opportunities for the use of expressive language. These activities were interesting to the kindergarteners. Active manipulation of materials by the students enabled them to learn through the process of discovery.

The selection of this solution appeared to the writer to be the closest possible choice to a developmental curriculum or a more individualized program with which the administration and teaching staff would agree.

This solution was chosen for the following reasons:

1. It affected the kindergarteners with the most problems in speech, language and fine motor development as well as readiness skills.
2. Since it was the end of the school year, major changes in the program were impossible.
3. This solution did not affect the regular classroom teacher's schedules.
4. The speech pathologist and remedial reading teacher's philosophies supported the use of developmental activities rather than the reading workbooks.
5. The stress free environment allowed the kindergarteners to feel positive about school.

The first plan of action was to use the Scott Kindergarten Checklist to assess the kindergartener's level of abilities at the beginning of the implementation period. Each of the students in the two lowest reading groups were assessed using the checklist. A record was made of the pretest results.

The next strategy was to change the 30 minute formal reading program workbook activities to developmental learning activities. The developmental activities involved the manipulation of concrete materials. The activities planned featured at least one activity

per 30 minute session. A great deal of redundacy is important, however, the selection of a variety of activities that go over the same concept were used.

The writer and two teachers met to review the strategies used in working with the kindergarteners and the developmental activities. The two teachers decided on the activities they used. The teachers were asked to allow a few minutes at the end of the period to allow the students the opportunity to talk about their work and allow the teachers time to assess the activity.

Since the kindergarteners are expected to know or learn their alphabet, several activities were used to introduce a new letter. The letters were shown, felt, and named. Several activities were done using a variety of materials, glitter, macoroni, rice, cotton balls, to form letters. Another activity that was used was a letter collage. Pictures whose name began with the identified letter were cut out of magazines and glued onto construction paper to make a collage. A variety of developmental learning activities may be found in the appendices (Appendix F).

Calendar Plan

Week 1

The following steps were used to introduce developmental learning activities during the 30′ reading period for the targeted kindergarteners.

1. On Monday before first period, a meeting with the speech

pathologist and remedial reading teacher was held. The discussion was regarding the principal points in the use of the developmental activities with the kindergarteners. The teachers were given the opportunity to choose the activities they used during the reading period. They were asked to record the activity and the student's responses on a Developmental Activities Log Sheet each day. (see Appendix D).

2. The teachers were scheduled to meet with the kindergarteners the same time each day.
3. Consideration was given to the kindergartener's developmental levels and their interests in planning the developmental learning activities (see Appendix F).
4. On Tuesday and Wednesday the pretest for the Scott Kindergarten Checklist (see Appendix C) was given to all the kindergarteners in the two lowest reading groups.
5. The results of the Scott Kindergarten Checklist (see Appendix C) pretest was tallied and recorded in a table.
6. The writer met with the groups of kindergarteners one day, Tuesday,for several weeks in order to be actively involved in the intervention.
7. The writer met with the teachers on Tuesday, to discuss the week's activities and make plans for the next week.

Weeks 2-12

1. The developmental activities which used the manipulation of concrete materials or language expression continued during the reading period each day when the school schedule permitted.
2. Daily notation was made by the teachers about the activities used.
3. It was realized that unknown or unplanned events may occur necesitating some change in strategy. Notes were made and were recorded in Chapter 4.
4. The writer continued to meet with the groups of kindergarteners each Tuesday when the schedule permitted.
5. The writer continued to meet with the teachers each Tuesday for the first four weeks to discuss the weeks activities and plan for the following week.

Following the end of the 12 week sessions the following steps were taken:

1. The writer administered a posttest of the Scott Kindergarten Checklist.
2. The writer collected the Scott Kindergarten Checklist data and tallied the results which are recorded in Chapter 5.
3. The Developmental Activity Logs were collected

and the information tabulated. This enabled the writer to know the number of days activities were used during intervention.

4. The writer interviewed the teachers to obtain their perceptions and feelings about the practicum.
5. The writer shared information regarding the completed practicum with the teachers and administration.

Report of the Action Taken

When the writer spoke with the teachers initially regarding the use of developmental learning activities rather than the formal reading workbooks, the speech pathologist suggested it would be easier for her to change the students' activities in her small group rather than the regular teachers changing so late in the school year. She also spoke with the remedial reading teacher who teaches the lowest afternoon reading group and suggested they could provide the same activities, therefore, increasing the number of children involved in this practicum.

Prior to the beginning of the implementation, a meeting was held with the speech pathologist and remedial reading teacher who were to use developmental activities rather than the formal reading workbooks during the reading period.

Plans were made to pretest the students. The writer was to provide the test materials needed. The teachers expressed some concern about the amount of time it would take them to pretest the

students alone and the writer readily agreed the writer would assist each teacher. Copies of the possible developmental activities to be used were given to the teachers.

The students were pretested and it took longer to complete the checklist than planned. Two days were needed to complete the instrument on the selected children. As with any new screening administered, it takes a while to get used to the instrument and the items which needed to be administered. The speech pathologist's room was small and it was difficult to work in the small space with both teachers working with a student while the other three students made objects with clay, drew a person and were doing something. The afternoon group was easier to work with as the room was large and had two tables which were used.

The teachers were given clipboards with the Developmental Activities Log to enable easy recording of the activities each day. They were told the writer would be available if there were any questions or problems.

The writer's immediate supervisor shared with the writer that the teachers were unhappy about all the paperwork which needed to be done and the Superintendent was concerned that the teachers not have a large amount of additional work to do. A copy of the Scott Developmental Checklist and Activities Log was shared with the writer's supervisor and Superintendent who did not feel there should be a problem. These had previously been shared with the teacher's principal. The writer attempted to keep the elementary principal informed about all of the plans, activities and relevant

literature. The writer was aware the principal needed to be informed of any activities in her school. The writer's supervisor had suggested the principal was the type who would be interested in reading literature relevant to developmentally appropriate practices and these were shared with her.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of Results

Developmental activities rather than the use of reading workbooks can provide kindergarteners with the opportunity to develop readiness skills. Some kindergarten students are developmentally young and have delays in language and fine motor development. These children become frustrated, unhappy and stressed with the work required of them to complete reading workbook pages which have small pictures and print as well as sometimes four different new concepts per page. Children learn through play. Developmental learning activities give children the chance to manipulate concrete materials while developing expressive language and readiness skills.

The students were screened before kindergarten or more than six months prior to the implementation of this proposal. Five students or 25% were placed in a low reading group in both the morning and afternoon kindergarten classes. The Scott Kindergarten Checklist was used as a pretest to determine the student's present developmental levels. It was determined that the children in the low reading groups still lacked many of the readiness skills the majority of 5 year olds have acquired. In

the area of language development, the 10 students knew an average of six out of a possible ten items. The lowest score was one item while there were four students who knew eight items. Fine motor development was screened to reveal that 10 students knew an average of 7.5 items out of a possible 10 items. One child knew as few as five items however, two students knew nine items. Under academics the students knew a mean of 7 items out of a possible 12 items. Two students knew as low as five academic items while six students were able to answer 8 items.

The teachers expressed positive feelings and ones of surprise regarding the growth the kindergarteners had made since their preschool screening about 9 months previously. The teachers who taught the reading period to the developmentally young kindergarteners previously expressed agreement with the writer's conclusion that the curriculum needed changing and at this time shared they changed the kindergartener's activities during reading peric prior to the beginning of the implementation period. The speech pathologist stated she and the remedial reading teacher had the ability to be more flexible with the curriculum during the reading period when she volunteered to work with the writer. She strongly agreed with a developmental philosophy and curriculum and apparently had difficulty using the reading series workbooks.

The teachers were given the opportunity to select activities from those given to them or to develop appropriate learning activities to be used during the reading period (see Appendix F).

This practicum took place in the spring of the school year which was late in the school calendar. There were a number of days that there was no school or no reading periods due to school activities such as assemblies, California Tests of Achievement administration or one teacher's absence. Since there were six reading groups, the absence of one teacher caused the formal reading period to be omitted on that day.

The regular kindergarten teachers agreed to record the learning activities that the identified kindergarteners worked on during reading period. During the first month after intervention began, the writer had the opportunity to speak to the kindergarten teachers about the activities that the students were doing during the reading period. The writer learned that the use of reading workbooks had been stopped and felt this was positive. If there was no reading period, the regular kindergarten teacher recorded on the activities log the learning activities the identified students did during the reading period. There were days the students were given the opportunity to choose the learning centers in which they worked as there was now more time. The activities chosen by the children were appropriate to their developmental level and interests. The students worked in the block building , painting and transportation areas, math, or science center. Brecekamp (1986) identifies several developmentally appropriate practices which includes that children learn from experimentation, self directed problem solving and active exploration.

The comments made by the head kindergarten teacher on the Developmental Activities Log suggested to this writer she was not uncomfortable omitting the formal reading period as she previously had stated she would be. The kindergarten teacher also seemed aware that the children were happier as well as still learning through activities and play. Some comments were as follows: children enjoyed the activity, children interested, nice not having to rush children, children are happier when we don't have reading (See Appendix F).

It is the writer's belief that children can grow through play, manipulation of concrete materials and an opportunity to share information with their peers and teachers. Elkind (1986) stated, "Formal instruction puts excessive demands on young children" (p 635). He described encouraging self directed learning by providing many materials to manipulate, explore and talk about. Bredekamp 1986 would see this as one component of a developmentally appropriate program.

The writer's first objective to provide one developmental activity during the reading period for the kindergarten students who lack readiness skills was documented in the Developmental Activities Log by both the special reading teachers and the kindergarten teachers. The writer feels that the fact that the kindergarteners did not have formal reading activities during the implementation of this proposal was positive and met the writer's first goal.

The second objective that each child in the lowest reading groups will demonstrate an increase in language skills as measured by mastery of 7 out of 10 language items on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist was met. The students completed an average of 9.5 items under language with seven students completing 10 items, two students completing 9 items and one student completing 7 items (see Table I).

Table I

LANGUAGE

	Pretest	Postest
Dana	5	10
Bobby	6	10
Matt	8	10
Jose	8	10
Manual	1	7
Stephanie	8	10
Joe	4	10
Peter	8	10
Deana	7	9
Tommy	4	9

The third objective was that each child in the targeted groups will demonstrate an increase in language skills as measured

by mastery of 7 out of 10 fine motor items on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist. The students completed an average of 9.9 items with nine students completing 10 items and one student completing 9 items (see Table II).

Table II

FINE MOTOR

	Pretest	Postest
Dana	6	10
Bobby	8	10
Matt	5	10
Jose	8	10
Manual	8	9
Stephanie	9	10
Joe	7	10
Peter	9	10
Deana	7	10
Tommy	8	10

The fourth objective that each child in the targeted groups will demonstrate an increase in academic skills as measured by mastery of 8 out of 12 items under academics on the Scott Kindergarten Checklist. The students completed an average of 10.9 items with four children completing 12 items, three children

completing 11 items, two children completing 10 items and one child completing 8 items (see Table III).

Table III

ACADEMICS

	Pretest	Postest
Dana	8	12
Bobby	8	11
Matt	6	10
Jose	8	10
Manual	5	8
Stephanie	8	12
Joe	7	12
Peter	8	11
Deana	8	12
Tommy	5	11

Conclusions

The Scott Kindergarten checklist was developed in the early part of the school year. An attempt was made to cover areas of fine motor, language and academic development that the majority of five year old children are able to do. However, the writer did not realize this would be used at the very end of the school year

and did not include appropriate tasks. Consideration should be given to the months gone by and some harder items more appropriate to 5 1/2 to 6 years old could have been added. On posttesting, the majority of the students were able to do all of the tasks which suggests higher level tasks were needed to give the students an opportunity to reach a higher ceiling level.

The fact that the second, third and fourth objectives were met with the use of activities by the kindergarteners rather than reading workbooks would support the writer's philosophy that readiness skills can be developed without formal reading instructions. This also provides support for the literature which suggested all children are not ready for formal academic study at the same time (Friesen, 1984, Cook and Stammer 1985). The child's behavioral age and not his chronological age should determine the time to introduce reading instruction (Ames, Gilespie, Haines and Ilg 1979).

In conclusion, the curriculum in kindergarten should provide a flexible program and provide for the differences in the readiness levels of children. Young children learn differently than older children or adults (Elkind 1986). Education should be adapted to the learning ability and developmental needs of the students. A child's behavior or developmental age and not his/her chronological age should be considered when determining the time to introduce formal reading instruction. Children's development

needs to be assessed to plan and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum. Children learn through a variety of activities and materials. Playful interaction with objects and people enable children to acquire knowledge.

The staff was able to convince the school board and administration that there are some children who are not ready for the present kindergarten curriculum. Next year the district is planning to have a Developmental Kindergarten for those children determined developmentally young. Two teachers were sent for training in the Gesell School Readiness Screening Test. A developmentally appropropriate curriculum will be selected and or developed for the new program.

Recommendations

One recommendation the writer would make to others would be to be careful in a new work setting. It is important to get to know your co-workers well before beginning a large project. Another recommendation would be to start the implementation in the early half of the school year.

Dissemination

Dissemenation of this practicum has already begun with the literature review and results presented to the superintendent and school board. The practicum results were supportive of the need to change the present kindergarten curriculum for some students.

One kindergarten with a developmental curriculum was approved for 1988-1989.

Information from this practicum was shared with colleagues from surrounding school districts at an inservice meeting. They were having problems with children who have a wide variety of developmental levels upon kindergarten registration. They had many questions as to how to meet their student's needs. They found the writer's review of the literature interesting and a positive discussion resulted.

Abstracts of the practicum will be presented to cluster members. A poster display will be presented and abstracts distributed of this practicum at the 1988 summer institute in Washington, D.C.

References

Ames, L. B., Gillespie, C., Haines, J. and ILG, F.L. (1979) The Gesell Institutes child from one to six: Evaluating the behavior of the preschool child. New York: Harper & Row.

Abbott, R. E. (1972) Developmental kindergarten classes of the Waukegan Community Unit School District # 60. Illinois State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Springfield. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED080204)

Bredekamp, S. (Ed.) (1986). NAEYC position statement on developmentally appropriate practice in programs for 4- and 5-year olds. In developmentally appropriate practice (pp. 47-55). Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Cansfield, W.B. (1986, January). "Early school success." Early Years, pp. 30-32.

Cooke, G. & Stammer, J. (1985, March, April). Grade retention and social promotion practices. Childhood Education, 61 (4). 302-308.

Elkind, D. (1988, January). Educating the very young: A call for clear thinking. NEA Today, pp. 22-27.

Elkind, (1986, May). Formal education and early childhood education: An essential difference. Phi Delta Kappan, 67 (9), 631-636.

Finlayson, H. J. (1977, November). Nonpromotion and selfconcept development. Phi Delta Kappan, pp. 205-206.

Friesen, D. (1984, March). Too much, too soon? Principal, pp. 14-18.

Galloway, J.E. & George, J. (1986). Junior Kindergarten. Educational Leadership, 44 (3), 68-69.

Gesell Institute (1987, January). The Gesell Institute responds. Young Children, pp. 7-8.

Ginsberg, H. & Opper, S. (1969). Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Grafft, W. (1980, May). A developmental kindergarten program. Educational Leadership, 44 (3).

Gredler, G.R. (1984, October). Transitional classes. A viable alternative for the at risk child? Psychology in the Schools, 21, 463-470.

Holmes, C. T. & Matthews, K. M. (1984, Summer). The effects of nonpromotion on elementary and junior high school pupils: A meta-analysis. Review of Educational Research, 54, (2), 225, 236.

Ilg, F. L. & Ames, L. B. (1972). School readiness (3rd ed.). New York: Harper & Row.

Kerzner, R. L. (1982, May). The effect of retention on achievement. Masters Thesis, Kean College of New Jersey. (EIRC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 216309)

Kirby, G. (1984, May). Junior first grade: Heading off school failure before it starts. Principal, pp. 29-31.

King, M. J. (1984). "Ready or not, here they come": A sourcebook on developmental readiness for parents, teachers, and school boards. Masters Thesis, California State University at Fresno. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED261345)

Meisels, S. J. (1987, January) Uses and abuses of developmental screening and school readiness testing. Young Children, pp. 4-6, 68-73.

Piaget, J. and Inhelder, B. (1969). The Psychology of the Child. New York: Basic Books.

Peterson, E. E., Degracie, J. S., and Ayabe, C. (1987-Spring) A longitudinal study of the effect of retention/promotion on academic achievement. American Educational Research Journal, 24, (1) pp. 107-118.

Sandoval, J. (1984, October) First Grade promotional practices: implications for the school psychologist's role: A symposium. Psychology in the Schools, 21, 457-462.

Schmidt, S. & Perino, J. (1985, April). Kindergarten screening results as predictors of academic achievement, potential and placement in second grade. Psychology in the Schools, 22, 146-151.

Senior, E. M. (1986, January-February). Learning disabled or merely mislabeled? The plight of the developmentally young child. Childhood Education, pp. 161-165.

Shepard, L. A. & Smith, M. L. (1986). Synthesis of research on school readiness and kindergarten retention. Educational Leadership, 44, (3), 78-86.

Simmer, M. L. (1983, April). Will raising the school entrance age reduce the risk of school failure? Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

Uphoff, J. K. & Gilmore, J. (1985). Pupil age at school entrance. How many are ready for success. Educational Leadership, 43, (1), 86-90.

Wood, C., Powell, S. and Knight, R. C. (1984, January). Predicting school readiness: the validity of developmental age. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 17, 8-11.

APPENDIX A

Teachers Survey

1. What should the children entering kindergarten be like?

2. What are the students in kindergarten doing?

3. What should the students in kindergarten be doing?

4. How do you feel about the present situation?

5. What would you like to see as goals for the kindergarten students?

APPENDIX B

RESPONSES TO TEACHER SURVEY

TEACHER SURVEY

1. What should the children entering kindergarten be like?

Able to be separated easily from parents (school adjusting)

2. What are the students in kindergarten doing?

Preparing for first grade - reading readiness, recognition of letters, shapes, numbers and colors

3. What should the students in kindergarten be doing?

Extension of above skills.

4. How do you feel about the present situation?

a. Need for all-day to develop skills in reading and math
b. Developmental for very low ones
c. Grouping

5. What would you like to see as goals for the kindergarten students?

a. Social adjustment / peer aceptance
b. All-day kindergarten (so little time, especially with specials)

TEACHER SURVEY

1. What should the children entering kindergarten be like?

a. Know name, address, telephone number, birthday
b. Somewhat independent of mommy
c. Be able to button, tie, zip, etc.
d. Be attentive to a task for at least 10 min.
e. Manipulate scissors, pencils, crayons
f. Able to work in large or small group setting
g. Able to follow 2-3 step directions

2. What are the students in kindergarten doing?

Fine and gross motor skills (cut, print, paste, etc. jump, hop, etc) Some are reading; speaking (speech patterns); Math concepts introduced, developing sight vocabulary, learning to follow directions, socializing, developing listning skills, reasoning; working independently or in group setting.

3. What should the students in kindergarten be doing?

Developing a positive self image. Working at his/her own level - some on very basic readiness skills, others on advanced programs. Should be developing independent work skills. Fine and gross motor skills developed and refined (progress again depending on entry level and maturity)

4. How do you feel about the present situation?

Frustrated! We could be much more effective (teachers and curriculum) if the children in developmental stage were allowed to be in a class geared specifically for them. Busing now determines placement - child's needs should be determining factor. Self-image would improve with proper placement - progress would follow.

5. What would you like to see as goals for the kindergarten students?

Goals would vary according to entry level. "Elite" goal would be everyone reading but it's not feasible if we address each child's needs and abilities. Each child should be experiencing success and failure as a part of learning not as a basis for grading.

TEACHER SURVEY

1. What should the children entering kindergarten be like?

Children should come in to kindergarten full of wonder, creativeness and willing to share thoughts and ideas freely. If allowed to do the above without constant pressure to grow because the program forces them to grow instead of growing at their maturity level, social habits and work habits will follow naturally.

2. What are the students in kindergarten doing?

I believe we are forcing children to go along with state and local curriculums because they are mandated and we are frustrating our children to become children with problems.

3. What should the students in kindergarten be doing?

They should be allowed to develop at their own pace through the use of manipulative activities, developing interest in the world around them, gaining satisfaction through creating, communicating ideas using various medias, developing skills in fundamental movements, and

developing good social behavior and above all not be expected to master any readiness learning.

4. How do you feel about the present situation?

Some of the children are extremely too immature for the reading program in the half-day kindergarten. The program is great if the child is developed his or her maturity in order to cope with the pressures of our program.

5. What would you like to see as goals for the kindergarten students?

I would like to see pre-testing done in the summer months, before the child enters kindergarten. Find a norm that would allow the normal 5 year old to develop at their own pace physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. If a child is not permitted to do this frustration will set in and motivation for learning is diminished.

TEACHER SURVEY

1. What should the children entering kindergarten be like?

a. able to attend and sit for appropriate time

b. some social interactive skills

c. age level semantics, syntax and vocabulary patterns (language basis)

d. basic concept awareness (name, color, size)

2. What are the students in kindergarten doing?

a. letter, number, color and shape recognition

b. basic readiness skills

c. socialization activities

d. following direction

e. expanding personal information (ie. name BD, address, phone number)

3. What should the students in kindergarten be doing?

While some of our current kindergarteners are, in fact, accomplishing age appropriate goals, approximately 25% of them are not. With these children, we are working on pre-school skills such as: personal information, fine motor skills (cutting, pasting, tracing, coloring), socialization skills (politeness, friendliness, etc.). These types of skills must be accomplished before we can start basic readiness skills.

4. How do you feel about the present situation?

5. What would you like to see as goals for the kindergarten students?

APPENDIX C

SCOTT KINDERGARTEN CHECKLIST

	Pretest		Posttest	
Language	YES	NO	YES	NO
1. Can state first and last name	____	____	____	____
2. Can state age	____	____	____	____
3. Can tell town or state in address	____	____	____	____
4. Can label six colors	____	____	____	____
5. Can label ten colors	____	____	____	____
6. Can identify three positional words - on, under, next to, beside, above	____	____	____	____
7. Repeat four digits	____	____	____	____
8. Use five words in sentence	____	____	____	____
9. Delivers two part message orally about own actions	____	____	____	____
10. Names 15 pictures	____	____	____	____
TOTAL	____	____	____	____
Fine Motor				
1. Can build a tilted bridge with 1" blocks	____	____	____	____
2. Can build a 5 block gate from model	____	____	____	____
3. Can write own first name	____	____	____	____
4. Can write 5 numbers in consecutive order	____	____	____	____
5. Copies a square recognizably	____	____	____	____
6. Copies a triangle recognizably	____	____	____	____
7. Makes vertical line between writing lines	____	____	____	____

	Pretest		Posttest	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
8. Draws a recognizable person in 5 parts	____	____	____	____
9. Cuts 13 cm circle within 10 mm in 35 seconds	____	____	____	____
10. Makes object with clay that is recognizable by others	____	____	____	____
TOTAL	____	____	____	____
Academics				
1. Recognizes own first name in print	____	____	____	____
2. Recognizes own last name in print	____	____	____	____
3. Can match 10 colors	____	____	____	____
4. Can give 3 blocks on command	____	____	____	____
5. Can give 5 beads on command	____	____	____	____
6. Rote counts to 10	____	____	____	____
7. Can count 8 objects	____	____	____	____
8. Knows and can correctly name 8 capital letters	____	____	____	____
9. Knows and can correctly name 10 numbers	____	____	____	____
10. Verbally identifys likenesses and differences in shapes - circle, square, rectangle, triangle	____	____	____	____
11. Verbally identifys likenesses and differences in sizes - small, medium, large	____	____	____	____
12. Can identify differences in objects - 2 smiling and 1 sad clown	____	____	____	____

APPENDIX D

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES LOG

Date	Activities	Comments

APPENDIX E

RECORDED DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES LOG

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES LOG

Speech Pathologist/Reading Teacher (SP)

Kindergarten Teacher (KT)

Date	Activities	Comments
3/15/88	Screening	SP Took longer than planned
3/16/88	Screening continued	SP Completed
3/17/88	Assembly - St. Patricks Day	No classes
3/18/88	Block building & painting areas	KT Students choice
3/21/88	Activity using dice, letter (F)	SP
3/22/88	Oral language development / visual discrimination - Sounds Around Us	SP
3/23/88	Alphabet Cans - letter (G)	SP
3/24/88	Oral language development/ classification skills activity	Sp
3/25/88	Learning centers	KT Students choice
3/28/88	Read story & discussed it - auditory recall	SP
3/29/88	Auditory activity - familiar sounds	SP
3/30/88	Easter projects -language & fine motor	SP

3/31/88	Spring Break		No school
4/ 5/88	Science & Math learning centers	KT	
4/ 6/88	Block building & painting areas	KT	Students choice
4/ 7/88	Letter recognition (H) activity	SP	
4/ 8/88	Finger painting	KT	
4/11-4/19/88	C.A.T. administration		No classes
4/20/88	Alphabet Can (I)	SP	
4/21/88	Listening skills activity	SP	
4/22/88	Block building,painting & transportation areas	KT	
4/25/88	Took a nature walk & made collage with findings	KT	
4/26-4/27/88	Pet care discussion. Did extensive folders on pet care	KT	
4/28/88	Started a house book. Discussed items found in rooms. Students then drew items	KT	
4/29/88	Continued working on house book	KT	
5/ 2/88	Activities to develop listening skills & following directions	KT	
5/ 3/88	Worked on journals and had free activity time	KT	Nice not having to rush children

5/ 4/88	Did alphabet books	KT	
5/ 5/88	Worked on House Book	KT	Children worked well and were interested
5/ 6/88	Had a picnic indoors. Learned new word - buffet	KT	
5/ 9/88	Experience chart	KT	
5/10-			
5/11/88	Finished House Book	KT	
5/12/88	Making folders for seasons	KT	
5/13/88	Pantamine toys. As each child secretly looks at a picture of a toy he will act out what he is doing	KT	
5/16/88	Prepositional concept activities	SP	
5/17/88	Prepositional concept activities	SP	
5/18/88	Letter recognition & recall - Alphabet Can	SP	
5/19/88	Art, Science & Housekeeping learning centers	KT	Students choice
5/20/88	Block building, painting & math learning centers	KT	Students choice
5/23/88	Season folders and	KT	Children are

	personal journals		happier when we do not have reading
5/24/88	Each child held a state and stood on the rug in the appropriate place for that state	KT	/
5/25/88	Rhyming concepts activity	SP	
5/26/88	Kindergarten trip to Circus		No classes
5/27/88	Assembly		No classes
5/30/88	Memorial Day		No classes
5/31/88	Activity to review writing basic letters	SP	
6/ 1/88	Zoo trip		No classes
6/ 2/88	Experience story chart	KT	
6/ 3/88	Color recognition papers	KT	
6/ 6/88	Letter recognition & matching	SP	
6/ 7/88	Visual perceptio & fine motor	SP	
6/ 8/88	Art, Science & Housekeeping learning centers	KT	Students choice
6/ 9/88	Smelling circle-sniff & scratch cards. Children guess substance	KT	Enjoyable
6/10/88	Made happy/ sad faceswith paper plates with yarn around edge	KT	Discussed feelings
6/13/88	Made Father's Day cards	KT	
6/14/88	Made Flag for Flag Day	KT	
6/15/88	Screening	Writer	

APPENDIX F

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES 78

SORTING AND CLASSIFYING

Materials: A collection of items children can sort and classify according to their physical characteristics - size, shape or color. (Buttons, small stones, beans, beads or nuts work well.) A divided container for a sorting tray.

Procedure: Children sort items according to a criteria they select (size, color, shape) by placing the ones that go together into the same section of the sorting tray.

Postassessment: Why do they belong together? How are they the same?

FLEXIBLE SHAPES & COLORS

Materials: Laminated strips - ruler width and 6" long. Strips should be made of poster board. At each end, with a paper punch, make a hole in the end. Brads of 1/2" are needed. Three or four colors of strips.

Procedure: Have brads and strips available to the children. They can make varieties of shapes in the same color or they can alternate colors.

Postassessment: What methods do the children use to classify, etc.? What shapes do they make?

ASSOCIATION GAME

Materials: The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown: paper pen, crayons

Procedure: Read the story. Ask children to pretend they are the mother (or father) bunny and their little one is running away. They always want to be near their little one so whatever he/she changes into, they will change into something to be near him/her. Let each child first tell what their little one will turn into and then what they will become to stay near. Write on a sheet of paper for each child -"If you become a _____, I will become a _____." Fill in with child's ideas. Give each child their paper to draw a picture of what they said.

Postassessment: Were children able to name two things that had some association with each other?

SHAPE BOOKS

Materials: Contruction paper, newsprint or manila paper, scissors, staples, crayons, pen

Procedure: Make individual books for children by cutting cover from construction paper and pages from manila or newsprint in the shape of circles, squares, rectangle, or triangles. Books can be titles "My Book of Square Things" or "Some Things Are Round" or "Triangles Everywhere", etc. Put 3-4 pages in each book. Children can draw or cut from magazines pictures of things that have the shape of their book. They can dictate a sentence about each page for the teacher to write in the book.

Postassessment: Were children interested in their books and those of friends?

SHADOWS

Materials: Shadows by Beatrice Schenck deRegniers. A sunny day or a bright light and screen, paper, glue and tongue depressors, yardstick and chalk.

Procedure: Read the book. Extend the experience by having a shadow play with figures cut by children and glued on tongue depressors. Let children pantomime actions behind a screen with a light for a shadow effect. Postassessment: How did your shadow change from early morning to lunch time to afternoon? What causes a shadow? What ways did you use to make shadows?

POCKETS

Materials: Peter's Pocket by Judi Barrett; felt, needles and thread, scissors, safety pins.

Procedure: Read the book. Cut out felt pockets using pattern in back of book. Let children sew pockets together. Write each child's name on his/her pocket and pin it on them, if they wish. Children enjoy finding things to fill the pocket.

Postassessment: Were the children able to manipulate needle and thread well enough to sew?

ALPHABET CANS

Materials: 26 coffee cans; contact paper - one plain color and one other design. Cover cans with contact design. Cut out all the letters, both upper and lower case, with the plain contact and put on opposite sides of the can.

Procedure: Several options are available for this activity: 1. Put objects out to go in can of beginning sound. 2. Arrange several cans in a large circle and play a musical can game. Children identify the letter they are next to. 3. Use them as building blocks. 4. Have the children make words with them.

Postassessment: By manipulating the cans, did the children better associate the name of the letter?

LACING MATCH

Materials: Poster board, magazines or workbooks to cut pictures from, glue, markers, shoelaces

Procedure: On the poster board, make a row of pictures or letters on the left side which is matched to a row on the right side. Use long laces, one attached beside each picture on left, which can be threaded through a hole beside a picture on the right. Skills which may be practiced: rhyming words, upper and lower case letters, beginning or ending sounds.

Postassessment: Were children able to match the rhymes or letters correctly?

BONES

Materials: (Laminated) red, blue and green dog dishes; red, blue and green bones in assorted sizes, 5 dogs with spots from 1 to 5.

Procedure: These materials may be used in a variety of ways: a) sort smallest to largest b) sort colors c) match bones to dishes d) have children put bones in varieties of positions, i.e. "in the bowl", "under the bowl".

Postassessment: Were the children able to classify and sequence?

BE A SHAPE

Materials: Open space

Procedure: Let children use their whole bodies to try to form shapes. For example: They may lie on their backs and put arms and legs in the air, meeting to form a triangle midway over their body. Let them work together to form squares (two children lie on the floor, bending at the waist to form a square) and other shapes.

Postassessment: Could children watching see the shapes formed? Could those involved tell what part or shape they were?

FEELING BOX

Materials: Rock, shells, pieces of fur, pieces of felt, leather material, marbles jacks, small ball

Procedure: Children sit in circle, draw object, describe how it feels & identify it. Children sit in circle, close eyes while one child withdraws an object and describes it. Member of the group then guess what it is and child who guesses correctly takes the place of first child.

Postassessment: What were some of the things that were in the box and how did they feel?

EXPERIENCE CHARTS

Materials: Large paper or chart tablet, marker

Procedure: Field trips, a cooking project, Fall leaves - any happening can be the basis of a language experience chart. The class can dictate to the teacher a short account of what they saw and did, what was their favorite part, and so on. The teacher writes it on the chart paper exactly as the children say it. It is important to use their words.

Postassessment: Were the children able to dictate a story?

IDENTIFYING COLOR GAME

Materials: Colored boxes, objects to place inside boxes i.e. small red car, brown glass, blue marble, green crayon, yellow toy cup, orange block, purple toy telephone, black felt tip pen, white dolls shoe.

Procedure: Objects are discussed before placing them in box. Different colored objects are placed in various colored boxes. A child is asked to choose one of a certain color from a particular colored box. Child withdraws object from color box while children in circle hide eyes. Child describes object and places it behind his back before other children open their eyes. First child calls on a member of the group to guess color of object described.

Postassessment: What were some of the things that were in the box? What color were they?

BISCUIT ALPHABET

Materials: Canned biscuits, shortening, cookie sheet

Procedure: Use 1/2 biscuit for the stem of each letter. Roll each biscuit into the shape of a snake and form the letters on a greased cookie sheet. Bake at 450° for 6 to 10 minutes.

Postassessment: What letter did you make? How is it different since it was baked?

COLORED LOLLIPOPS

Materials: Does anyone know the three main colors? What happens when you put them together or on top of each other?

Procedure: Teacher-made lollipops with circles of primary colors on every ring. Have children look at objects or water with the various colors. They can combine them to see how orange and green are made.

Postassessment: How did anyone make green or orange?

COUNTING EGGS

Materials: Egg carton, 12 small plastic eggs all the same color (the kind that is hollow and screws open), 1 large hollow plastic egg and objects suitable for counting, i.e. buttons, etc.

Procedure: Use felt pen to number each egg from 1 to 12. Make the same number of dots on each egg to correspond to the number. Place any number of eggs in the carton, depending on child's ability. Place uniform counting materials in large egg. Have child place correct number of buttons in egg to correspond to the number indicated.

Postassessment: Check to see if the child counted correctly. "Which egg has the most?" the least?"

WHICH BOX?

Materials: Four small boxes labeled first, second, third, fourth; a penny

Procedure: Place the four boxes on the table. Have children close their eyes while a penny is hidden under one of the boxes. Have children open their eyes and guess which box the penny is under. (The child must say, "The penny is under the first, second, third, fourth, box". The child may simply point or say that one.

Postassessment: Did the children use ordinal numbers correctly?

STONE CLASSIFICATION

Materials: An assortment of stones

Procedure: Have child pick one criteria to sort and classify stones. One child may use size and make piles of small, medium and large stones. Another child may sort by shape or color.

Postassessment: How did you sort your stones? Which pile has the most? the least?

NUMBER TRAIN

Materials: Small toy engine and cars that hook together (mark numerals 1 through 10 on one side of the train car and the appropriate number of dots on the other side); or engine and cars cut from colored poster board, marked and laminated.

Procedure: Each child will hook the cars into train formation in numerical order, from 1 to 10. The teacher might begin as follows: "The engine is going to pick up the cars in order. Which one will it pick up first? Can you find that one? Which one comes after that?

Postassessment: Can the child name the numbers in order? Did the child have trouble recognizing any numerals?